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LETTER DATED 17 AUGUST 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

It is with deep concern that I inform you of the alarming details of a massive offensive by the armed forces of Armenia against territories of the Azerbaijani Republic.

17 August, 1200 hours

The situation in the town of Fizuli is extremely critical. The noose is tightening. The town is on the verge of falling. Bitter street battles are being waged. Although the greater part of the peaceful population has been evacuated, there are many civilian casualties.

An equally critical situation has also arisen in the neighbouring Djebrail district. A tank column belonging to the Armenian armed forces has cut off the Fizuli-Djebrail road and has advanced towards the district centre from the east (1.5 kilometres) and also from the west and the north, having captured almost all of the settlements on the approaches to the city. Subunits of Armenian armed forces are incessantly attacking the village of Sirik, which is on the way to Djebrail. A further four settlements in the Djebrail district are under threat of occupation: Chareken, Papy, Khorovlu and Bashtepe. The town of Djebrail is half encircled and is being subjected to constant rocket artillery fire.

17 August, 1400 hours

As before, the situation in the vicinity of the towns of Fizuli and Djebrail remains critical. Fighting continues. As a result of the shelling of Djebrail and the settlements in the district, the number of casualties among the civilian population grows by the hour.

With a view to diverting Azerbaijani army forces, Armenian troops have subjected to constant attack from the direction of Gadrut Azerbaijani positions in the Kubatly district. After capturing two strategic and important heights (Garagaya and Topagach), subunits of Armenian armed forces have occupied the settlement of Basharat and are continually shelling the villages of Milanly and Khat in the north-eastern part of the district.

A concentration of armoured vehicles and personnel of the Armenian army is in Armenian territory (in the Kafan and Goris districts) along the borders with the Gubadly and Zangelan districts of Azerbaijan. It is assumed that, as in the capture of Lachin and Kelbajar, after breaking through Azerbaijani positions from the direction of the occupied territory of Karabakh, fresh forces from military bases in Armenia will go over to the offensive.

There is no pause in the shelling of the entire border area of north-west Azerbaijan, including the towns of Tauz and Kazakh. During the shelling, 5 persons have died and 13 have been injured.

17 August, 1800 hours

In the Djebrail district, Armenian troops are attempting to break through to the Iranian border with a view to cutting off the Gubadly and Zangelan districts from Azerbaijan. Battles are being waged at 13 kilometres from the border river of Araz.

Armenian armed forces are barbarically destroying and burning captured villages in the Djebrail district. Having consolidated their positions on the approaches to the town, Armenian troops are subjecting it to intensive tank and artillery shelling. As a result, there are many casualties among the peaceful population.

Since the second half of the day, the district centres of Gubadly and Zangelan have been subjected to shelling from howitzers and Grad rocket launchers in Armenian territory.

The Gubadly district was attacked by the Armenian army on three sides. From the direction of Gadrut, where they have captured two dominating heights and the village of Basharat, Armenian troops are advancing deep into the territory of the district in the direction of the villages of Milanly and Khat. From the north, from the occupied territory of Lachin, the villages of Djijimli and Gazydere have been attacked. Since 1600 hours, Armenian armed forces with the support of armoured vehicles, having violated the Azerbaijani frontier from the direction of the Kafan district in Armenia, have been attempting to advance deep into the Gubadly district of Azerbaijan. Battles are being waged in all three sectors.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hassan A. HASSANOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative